

March 20, 2014

Dinkey Collaborative meeting at the Sierra National Forest Supervisors Office

The Dinkey Collaborative met on March 20, and spent the morning discussing the ongoing preparation for planning the Exchequer project. Following a brief member presentation, the group discussed a series of draft project objectives developed in January and refined in February. Building on this, another member presented on the effort to develop a cumulative effects analysis process for Pacific fisher and California spotted owl, which the group also discussed. Two more member presenters reviewed work to identify where the boundary could be expanded to better accommodate the use of prescribed fire, also followed by discussion. Another member presented on the parallel work to plan for cultural burning in the Exchequer project and at the landscape scale. In terms of process, the group also reviewed and recommended a project planning timeline, with the caveat that dates might shift depending on evolving Forest and member obligations, which would have to be discussed with the full group if necessary. Lastly, the group reviewed a draft proposal for an Interdisciplinary (ID) Team liaison, clarifying how this person would serve as a data conduit and necessary qualifications. Before lunch the Forest Supervisor presented a new series of public communication mylar overlays, which should be available for future public events. The Monitoring Work Group Co-Lead briefed the group after lunch on new funding provided to the Sierra Institute to support coordination and information exchange between the three California CFLRs, and the expected date for a revised socioeconomic assessment report (spring or early summer 2014). Immediately thereafter, the group had a videoconference with the Deputy Regional Forester for Resources and regional budget director, to review the budget status for the Collaborative, how to better communicate about budgeting in the future, and regional support for prescribed fire funding and crews. A series of three presenters then spoke about new modeling results showing the limits of mechanical treatments on the national forests in the Sierra Nevada, practical fire management activities on private lands, and how to define resource benefits as related to high severity fire; one presenter was from the Pacific Southwest Research Station, another was a Collaborative member, and the third from the Regional Office. Next, a presenter from the Region's Remote Sensing Lab reviewed new products from LiDAR (light detection and ranging) flights in 2011 and 2012, which provide a wealth of data but challenges for analysis, given the newness of the technology. The group discussed how this could aid measurement of concepts like heterogeneity as well as help characterize wildlife relationships with habitat. Finally, the Communication Work Group Co-Lead presented on recent communication activities, and obtained feedback about upcoming public events. The group postponed its budget item to April 17, at which time it will cover this item, continue Exchequer pre-planning, revisit the ID team liaison position, recommend the Collaborative Adaptive Management process, and revive its Finance and Budgeting Work Group.